

COSMIC COMBAT™

MENU OPTIONS

- 1.) Press **F1** until the desired length of days is shown.
- 2.) Press **F3** if you want to play the single move game.
- 3.) Press **F5** if you want to play without storms.
- 4.) Press **F7** to start the game.

Number of Days

Cosmic Combat may be played for 10 to 250 space pioneer days. At the end of each "day" the pattern of space pioneers changes depending on which space pioneers have formed successful colonies (see SPACE PIONEER HABITS for more on this.) Each "day" lasts about two seconds.

Single Move Game

ONE PLAYER:

If you would like to learn to recognize and control patterns of space pioneers, you can play the SINGLE MOVE GAME. For additional information on the single move game for one player, see the section of GAME VARIATIONS FOR ONE PLAYER.

TWO PLAYERS:

In this variation, each player takes turns placing one space pioneer on the planet per day. There is no time limit on your moves. This allows you to concentrate on each of your moves and to develop a strategy using your understanding of space pioneer habits. A day passes only after both players have put one space pioneer on the surface.

No Storms

This option allows you to play without storms. If you do not select this option, COSMIC COMBAT will be played with space storms, adding another dimension to the game. These storms may destroy the shelters that you build for your space pioneers, and make flying your saucer more challenging.

PLAYING THE GAME

To begin play, move the joystick to make your flying saucer appear. Begin by placing five space pioneers in a group. Space pioneers are released by pressing the button on your joystick. The game doesn't begin until a total of ten space pioneers (yours or your opponent's) have been placed. CAREFUL, don't waste space pioneers by trying to put two in the same spot. Only one pioneer will appear, so take your time and pick the locations carefully. (See SPACE PIONEER HABITS for the rules by which space pioneers appear and disappear.)

You can build shelters for your space pioneers by pressing the joystick button and holding it down for several seconds. A space pioneer in a shelter will always survive.

But watch out if you are playing with space storms! Shelters can be destroyed by storms and may need to be replaced. Also, your flying saucer can be blown out of control by these storms, making it hard to place more space pioneers on the planet.

SCORING

Every "day" the computer counts how many space pioneers you have on the planet and adds them to your score. At the end of the game, the player with the highest score is the winner.

While the game is being played, the player with the most space pioneers will have his or her score displayed in white. At the end of the game, the winner's score will flash.

GAME VARIATIONS FOR ONE PLAYER

In both of these games, you move one saucer off the screen and play alone, using only one of the two joysticks.

Continuous Move Game—One Player

This version allows you to improve your skill in placing space pioneers on the planet.

- Select the NO STORMS option if you wish to play the game without the storms.
- Move one of the saucers off the screen.
- Press the button on the joystick of the off-screen saucer five times.
- Start the game by placing five space pioneers on the planet with your saucer.
- As days pass, continue to use the on-screen saucer to position and place your space pioneers.

Single Move Game—One Player (Beginner or the Serious Player)

This version allows you to study what happens to your space pioneers as each individual day passes.

- Select the number of days to be played.
- Select the NO STORMS option to play the game without storms.
- Move one of the flying saucers off the screen.
- Use the other saucer to place as many groups of space pioneers as you want on the planet.
- Press the joystick button of the off-screen saucer until one day passes. (Remember that the first day does not pass until you have pressed the joystick buttons a total of ten times.)
- Move your saucer off the screen.
- Once the game begins (one day has passed), press both joystick buttons once each time you want to make another day pass.
- If you want to change the patterns, move your saucer on-screen and place more space pioneers on the planet. Then press the joystick button of the off-screen saucer to make the next day pass.

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

Space Pioneer Habits

Three basic rules determine the growth and change of colonies in COSMIC COMBAT:

1. Survival. Every space pioneer with two or three "neighboring" pioneers survives into the next day. Pioneers are "neighbors" whenever they touch one another, either side-to-side or corner-to-corner.
2. Death. Any pioneer with four or more neighbors dies (is removed) from overpopulation. Every pioneer with one neighbor or none dies from isolation.
3. Birth. Each empty cell adjacent to exactly three neighbors is a birth cell. A space pioneer appears in this empty cell in the next generation.

Once you become familiar with the habits of space pioneers and develop some skill in establishing, maintaining and expanding colonies, consider some strategies for improving your game play:

- Rather than concentrate on one area of the planet, form patterns of space pioneers throughout the entire planet.
- Link together colonies of space pioneers in order to expand your control over the entire planet.
- Use shelters to help establish new colonies of space pioneers and strengthen existing groups.
- Overcrowd your opponent's colonies by adding your space pioneers to his crowded colonies.
- Eliminate your opponent's small or sparse colonies by surrounding them with your space pioneers or by creating a colony of your own space pioneers nearby.

As you become a more advanced COSMIC COMBAT player, you will see the need to understand and predict the behavior of space pioneers. The following illustration, for example, shows how three space pioneers would behave given five different initial colony patterns. The ultimate viability of your colony depends not only on the number of pioneers it contains, but also on the pattern in which you place the pioneers. To gain a more complete understanding of the habits of space pioneers, practice playing the Single Move Game alone.

HABITS OF THREE SPACE PIONEERS

Starting Pattern



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